

The Weekly Wing
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and his go-to contributor Alex Hebeisen (The Typist)

Hello subscribers! This week's topic is about the beaks of birds. There will also be a short story at the end. There are 8 different types of beaks. They are cracker, shredder, chisel, probe, strainer, spear, tweezer, and the Swiss Army knife.

Lets start with the cracker. Birds like sparrows and cardinals use their beaks for cracking the outside of a hard nut or seed. This is one of the most common beaks among songbirds. Cardinals use cracker beaks to crack open black oil sunflower seeds.

Shredder beaks are found mainly on birds of prey. They are used for tearing apart prey. They are like a cracker but point downward at the tip of the beak. Just because a bird's beak points down does not mean it is a bird of prey though. The beak must have something kind of like a hook at the end.

Chisel beaks are found on woodpeckers. They are used for boring into wood to find insects. To do this they hammer their head against the wood to create a hole (the structure of their head allows them to do this). When their beaks hit the wood it falls away (the wood, not the beak) revealing the inside of the tree. The woodpecker then sends out it's tongue into the tree and takes out an insect.

Probe beaks are long slender beaks used for probing the nectar out of the flowers with their tongues. This beak is most commonly found on humming birds. This is one of the strangest beaks of all.

Next is the strainer beak, which is most commonly found on waterfowl like ducks. They use it to filter insects and algae out of the water and into their mouths. It is long, wide, and rather easy to identify.

Spear beaks are found mostly on herons, egrets, and kingfishers. They are used to spear incoming fish and amphibians. Spear beaks are large, long, and pointed. Perfect for a fish kabob.

Tweezer beaks are found on birds like warblers and are small and perfect for catching mosquitos mid-flight. This beak is the same shape as a spear beak but much shorter. This is the thinnest and smallest beak of them all.

The Swiss Army Knife beak is all the beaks wrapped up into one. It can crack nuts, spear fish, and even catch insects mid-flight. This beak can be found mostly on crows and ravens.

As we said we have a short story. Hi, it's Brandon, the guy with the birding oasis in his backyard. If you thought I had everything a birder could have, you

were wrong. I am going hunting with my dad this year, so we bought a ground blind. But the way I use it, a bird blind for taking pictures. I can now get closer to birds than ever before!

Below are some pictures of different types of bird beaks taken with the ground blind or again as I call it, the bird blind.





